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Identical letters dated 23 October 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, I wish to draw your attention to the following information.

Terrorist groups continue to attack residential areas and civilian institutions in Damascus and its environs by indiscriminately firing mortar shells at them. On 22 October 2013, the city of Jaramana in Rif Dimashq came under indiscriminate mortar fire. The shells struck a school complex and a number of civilian homes, killing 6 civilians and injuring 40 others. Among the injured are 15 students, some of whom are critically wounded.

On 20 October 2013, armed terrorist gangs that espouse an extreme takfirist doctrine derived from Al-Qaida ideology committed a massacre in Hama. A suicide terrorist detonated a truck that had been packed with 1.5 tons of explosives near the Agricultural Machinery Company, at the eastern entrance of Hama. The explosion killed 37 civilians, including two children and several university students, and injured scores of others. At the time of the attack, the area was packed with private and public transportation vehicles; trucks carrying gas cylinders for domestic use and food caught fire. In addition, some 32 cars and many stores and homes in the area were severely damaged. The Nusrah Front, a branch of Al-Qaida, claimed responsibility for this terrorist attack.

The Syrian Arab Republic has previously written to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council concerning the repeated terrorist attacks that Al-Qaida, acting through its numerous branches, is committing throughout Syrian territory with the support of certain States in the region and States outside the region. In that connection, it rejects the policy of double standards that some States, including those that are permanent members of the Council, are applying with regard to the international counter-terrorism effort.

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This policy is manifest in the Council's refusal to condemn many of the terrorist crimes that gangs affiliated with Al-Qaida have committed in Syrian territory, killing hundreds of innocent civilians. Moreover, those States continue to provide, under various pretexts, all forms of logistical, military and material support to armed terrorist groups.

Those States, which claim to be fighting terrorism in many parts of the world, have created new expressions and categories in order to differentiate among the various armed terrorist groups and convince the world that there is bad terrorism, which should be condemned, and terrorism that is acceptable to those States and should be supported and encouraged.

The Syrian Arab Republic would like to point out that the terrorist crimes being committed in its territory continue to be ignored and that certain States continue to support terrorism. It also warns of the dangers posed by this reckless conduct, which threatens stability in Syria, the region and beyond and undermines the basis of international cooperation in countering the scourge of terrorism, the crimes and terror of which transcend borders.

Under the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. Accordingly, the Council must ensure that States respect their legal obligations as set out in Council resolutions and international instruments concerning counter-terrorism.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that the terrorist acts committed by these killers will not deter it from defending and protecting its citizens. It will continue to fight terrorism and, at the same time, strive to arrive at a political solution to the crisis in Syria that is based on Syrian-led dialogue among Syrians and that ensures respect for the sovereignty of Syria and the choices of the Syrian people as they shape their country's future without foreign intervention.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative